

*120. c. 2*    *J. E. b. 2*    *24d*

THE

~~24d~~

# JUVENILE SPEAKER;

OR

## DIALOGUES,

AND

## MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

In PROSE and VERSE;

FOR THE

## INSTRUCTION OF YOUTH,

IN THE

## ART OF READING.

By the AUTHOR of

The POLITE REASONER.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. BENT, Pater noster Row.

M DCC LXXXVII.



LONDON:

Printed for W. CHAPMAN, by J. DODS, 1790.

ESTATE OF

## P R E F A C E.

WHILST works of great merit, both with regard to design and execution, are offered as assistants in forming the Orator for the Bar, the Pulpit, or any other public situation, is it not surprising, that no one has yet presented us with any helps of this kind, for such whose youth seems to exclude them from the benefit offered to those of riper understandings?

Thus are numerous young English pupils left without any aid of this sort, till qualified to have Enfield's, or some less easy Speaker, put into their hands, which is seldom very early, particularly in seminaries for female education.

For the use of a few, of those whose tender years seem by our great authors neglected, this little collection was first designed; as the Compiler thought it reasonable to suppose, that a more early application, of similar methods to those which have been found so successful, might prove of great advantage, particularly in banishing

ing those unnatural tones of voice, which children almost universally read with, or a dull monotony, which is nearly as disagreeable, and equally bad in its effects.

Thus to obviate an experienced difficulty, in finding a publication calculated to assist the little speaker; and to render unnecessary frequent researches for examples on different subjects, for reading to young pupils, or recommending to them, as proper for committing to memory, in order to be recited in a manner conducive to their improvement, these extracts were thrown together, not as a complete, or perfect work, but with a humble hope, of its being a useful one, to those for whose assistance it was particularly designed.

And if, from similar motives, it should be honoured with the slightest approbation of those whose characters stand high in society, and who have the important care of numbers, the Author presumes not to think, that approbation can rise from its meriting a preference to other compilations, but on the contrary, is truly sensible, its best re-

com-

## P R E F A C E.      iii

commendation is their superiority, which renders them of the utmost utility to those of riper understandings, whilst this little collection is humbly offered, as a moral companion, previous to their introduction to those masterly performances.

Yet, desirous to remove, as far as possible, every difficulty the young pupil has to engage with, and to present the Juvenile Speaker, as a pleasing and easy companion, due attention has been paid to type and paper; which particulars, trifling as they may seem, are of some consequence; for bad print and worse paper, such wretched productions as the press teems with, for the use of schools, are by no means likely to facilitate the progress of the learner, by making more pleasing the art they are intended to promote.

Children cannot too soon be made sensible, that their natural and easy management of the voice when speaking, will be the most pleasing when they read; and indeed, is the only manner that can do justice to the author's sentiments, or be made acceptable:

iv P R E F A C E.

to their hearers. And the present universality of committing pieces to memory, and learning to recite them with propriety and grace, must greatly contribute to this desirable effect.

As in the early dawn of reason, their slender judgment requires a suitable appeal to their senses, and that reasoning faculty it has pleased heaven to bestow on the human species, and which, as well as every other mental gift, gains strength by proper exercise.

But the mind, like the body, gains strength by proper exercise, and of course the want of it must be injurious; yet this is not the only bad consequence sustained by its neglect; for while they are ignorant of the easy and natural, in reading, they are unable to relish what they read, and by this means a source of entertainment, and if rightly directed, a vast field of improvement, are shut from them; for though they may gaze over the sentences, or indeed mechanically articulate the words, yet as a shadow these pass before them, and leave

## P R E F A C E.

so impression, for they are as insensible to the meaning, as to the beauties of what they read. Can we, if we reflect for a moment, expect them to find entertainment or instruction, in what their manner of reading renders unnatural and disgusting?

The learned Sheridan, in his Art of Reading, pays great attention to the disagreeable habits early caught, though, he observes, frequently disregarded. Among these he enumerates indistinct articulation, and a constrained unnatural tone of voice, which he remarks, by being neglected when young, ‘have generally passed irremediable through life.’

Yet it appears strange, that those, whose reason one would imagine matured, and their judgment strengthened by time, can be so far enslaved by custom and early habitude, as to remain under their dominion, without consulting even common sense. And to what other cause can we attribute that change of voice which some people assume when they read, which, as is frequent with children, is so widely different from

vi P R E F A C E.

from their manner of speaking, that we need ocular demonstration to convince us it is the same person.

Can we then too early resist so formidable an opponent as custom? And are not these bad habits made general by imitation?

Recitation, and short examples of graceful reading, are among the approved methods of preventing and removing those disgusting effects. And this publication is particularly intended to add to the practical convenience and ease of these methods.

The Introductory Dialogues are intended to raise a spirit of emulation in the juvenile reader, and to convey instruction in an agreeable manner, and excite the youthful attention.

It is therefore earnestly hoped, the good design of this work will be accepted, as some excuse for its imperfect execution, and that the motives which produced it, the benefit of a few, will, with the candid reader, plead some apology for its defects.

C O N-

# CONTENTS.

## INTRODUCTORY DIALOGUES.

1 George and Frederick	Page 1
2 Charles and George	4
3 The same, continued	9
4 The same, continued	14

## PROSAICK PIECES.

1 Introduction to Qeconomy of Human Life	21
2 On Contentment, Employment of Time, &c.	22
3 On the Improvement of the Faculties	24
4 On Pleasing in Company	25
5 On the Advantages of Virtue	26
6 On Truth and Falsehood	28
7 Beauty and Deformity	30
8 The Affectiong Interview	32
9 Dialogue	34
10 On Pleasure	36
11 The Benefits of Devotion	37
12 On	

## CONTENTS.

12	<i>On the Disposition of the Heart</i>	39
13	<i>The Captive Hero</i>	40
14	<i>The Death of Darius</i>	41
15	<i>On Absence, Solitude, and Friendship</i>	43
16	<i>Religion Universal</i>	45
17	<i>On Industry and the Improvement of Time</i>	46
18	<i>The Contrast; or Paulo and Avaro</i>	48
19	<i>Prose Pastoral</i>	51
20	<i>Obidah; or the Journey of a Day</i>	54
21	<i>On Pride</i>	62
22	<i>The Art of Happiness</i>	66

## POETICK PIECES.

1	<i>A Prayer for Indifference</i>	72
2	<i>Stanza</i>	75
3	<i>Corydon, a Pastoral</i>	76
4	<i>Noon, a Pastoral</i>	78
5	<i>Evening, a Pastoral</i>	79
6	<i>The Thrush and Pie</i>	81
7	<i>The Fox and Cat</i>	83
8	<i>An</i>	

## C O N T E N T S.

8	<i>An Epistle to a Friend in Town</i>	-	85
9	<i>Ophelia's Urn</i>	-	86
10	<i>The Country Box</i>	-	87
11	<i>On Providence</i>	-	92
12	<i>On Creation</i>	-	93
13	<i>On the Death of Mr. Levet</i>	-	94
14	<i>Madam Blaze</i>	-	96
15	<i>On the Works of Creation</i>	-	97
16	<i>Search after Happiness</i>	-	98
17	<i>The Hero's School of Morality</i>	-	101
18	<i>Meditations in a Grove</i>	-	103
19	<i>The present Condition of Man vindicated</i>	-	105
20	<i>Epistle to a Friend</i>	-	106
21	<i>Sweetness, an Ode</i>	-	107
22	<i>The Chameleon</i>	-	110
23	<i>An Address to the Deity</i>	-	112
24	<i>From Young's Night Thoughts</i>	-	113
25	<i>Spring</i>	-	114
26	<i>Summer</i>	-	115
27	<i>Autumn</i>	-	116
28	<i>Winter</i>	-	117

By the same AUTHOR,  
*Is lately published, Price 2s. 6d.*

THE  
POLITE REASONER:  
IN  
LETTERS  
ADDRESSED TO  
A YOUNG LADY,  
AT A  
BOARDING SCHOOL  
IN  
HODDESDON,  
HARTFORDSHIRE.

\* \* The Design of these Letters is to call forth the early Dawn of Reason into Action. To wake the youthful Senses into Thought; to teach them to reason from what they see; and to prevent that Rust of erroneous Education, which makes them look with Indifference upon every common Object, however worthy their Attention.

[1]  
INTRODUCTORY DIALOGUES.

## DIALOGUE I.

*George and Frederic.*

*George.* Why brother, pray where have you been?

*O H.* Frederic, you should have been

with me.

*Fred.* Why brother, pray where have you been?

*Geo.* At Mr. Brown's, and you cannot think how much a large company there have been entertained by little Henry, who you know is just come home for the vacation.

*Fred.* How pray could that rude boy entertain them?

*Geo.* You brother may have seen him before he went to school, for I have heard he was very rude then, but indeed Frederic, you

B can.

cannot imagine how well he behaves now; but what highly pleased the company, was, his repeating many pieces so well, that you would have thought they were all his own.

*Fred.* What were those pieces?

*Geo.* O, several, and they all seemed equally easy to him.

*Fred.* I should like much to hear him.

*Geo.* I wish you could, for I am sure, you would be pleased with his manner, it is so natural, and so like his common way of speaking; for my part, I could have listened to him all day, but I was ashamed for I heard Mr. Smith say to a lady who sat next him, I do not doubt but Master George (looking at me) can exceed this little fellow, for he has been three times as long at school.

*Fred.* And can you George?

*Geo.* No, that I cannot, or I would have stayed much longer to have heard Henry, but I was so ashamed I was glad of an opportunity to steal away, before he had finished speaking, for I feared Mr. Smith would call upon me, to oblige the company in the same way.

*Fred.*

*Fred.* Well George, if he had, you could have given them some verses, could you not?

*Geo.* Indeed brother you are mistaken, for I have neglected getting perfectly many pieces which have been set me, and others I have almost forgot. But if I had remembered them all, I should have disliked to speak them after Henry.

*Fred.* Why, what are you ashamed of being in genteel company, or would you behave foolish, because you were not at home, but amongst strangers?

*Geo.* No, brother, I should be sorry to appear so ill-bred, but when you hear Henry, you will own I have reason to be ashamed of my manner of repeating; he speaks with so much freedom, and so easy and agreeable. But here comes Charles, and I will request him to teach me.

**DIALOGUE II.***Charles and George.**Charles.*

**W**HAT, George, are you here? why did you leave Mr. Brown's so abruptly? The company there expressed their surprise.—Mr. Smith in particular was much disappointed, that you did not stay and amuse them with some of those pieces, which he said he did not doubt but you could speak in an able manner.

*Geo.* Indeed, Charles, I should have been very glad to have obliged the company, if I could repeat well; but I cannot, and was afraid to stay, as I am sure it is very disagreeable to hear fine pieces murdered, as I have heard you call it. And I am ashamed to be so far out done by such a little boy.

*Char.* If that was your motive, you will rejoice at the escape you have had, for the company inquired for you, and from Mr. Smith's expressing a great desire to hear you, the wish became general, and they all seem-

ed much disappointed, when they found you had left the house.

*Geo.* I am very sorry I could not tarry, and do myself credit by entertaining them; but had I attempted it, I should have appeared ridiculous, and perhaps have been laughed at all my life after.

*Char.* That you might George, as I suppose Master Jones will be, for he spoke

next to nothing all the time you were here.

*Geo.* And how did he perform?

*Char.* When he first came forward, the company had high expectations, and were impatient for him to begin. But there he stood, hemming and clearing his voice, as though he had some great and difficult task to engage with. But no sooner had he spoke the first sentence, than the surprise and disappointment of the company were apparent, for you never heard such a disagreeable, unnatural tune, in your life.

*Geo.* Bless me, has he a tune with what he repeats?

*Char.* Yes, and with what he reads too. And I assure you he was not a little mortified,

fied, when the party, instead of praising him as they had done Henry, told him, they would not trouble him any longer: that he had said quite enough, &c. ob 113

Geo. I am glad I got off, for they must have treated me in the same manner. But I hope soon to conquer so bad a habit.

Char. That you may do if you please; for I remember reading with such a fine tune, that my father, who was in another room, rung the bell to inquire if a beggar was at the door, and was not a little angry when informed, it was only master Charles reading. But I had been from home, and in that time had by imitation learned this disagreeable habit, and of course was heartily laughed at.

Geo. And so might I have been, had I not heard Henry, who I observe speaks so easy, and so like what he does at other times, that when I entered the room, I thought he was only talking in a very graceful manner, and I wondered to hear him so very clever, that every one present was silent and attentive; for not one of them spoke,

except in a low voice, you might hear them say, sweet fellow ! charming boy ! dear little creature ! &c. And they looked so delighted.

*Char.* Indeed they were so; and Henry knows it well, from the many presents he has had on the occasion, and the very high favour he is in with all the party. And as to his parents, they are quite overjoyed, so great are his improvements since at school.

*Geo.* Well they may; for I hear he is ten times more obliging to them, and to all his acquaintance, and never wants twice asking to do any thing.

*Char.* So I am informed, and that his master has wrote to acquaint his friends that he has been a good boy, very attentive to his instructors, and much beloved by his companions.

*Geo.* I think they must like him: but what a change, for you know how rude he used to speak to the servants; but now he speaks to them in quite another manner, and Thomas says he is glad to do any thing for him; but he used to dislike him so much

that he was sorry when the holidays were come.

*Char.* How agreeable it is to see so happy a change.

*Geo.* You know not Charles what pleasure it has given me, and if you will be so kind as to inform me, how I may attain the art of reading and speaking, like Henry, I will ever own the obligation, and pay the greatest attention to your information.

*Char.* I shall be glad to acquaint you George with what I have found useful myself, and I doubt not but you, by the same method, will with attention to good examples, soon speak with propriety.

*Geo.* I thank you Charles, and when you please will attend to your information.

*Char.* To-morrow then, if agreeable, we will begin this subject.

*Geo.* You are very obliging, and in return, I hope to shew you by diligence how sensible I am of this favour.

DIALOGUE  
BOOK OF AND EXERCISES OF ENGLISH PRIMER.  
FED.

**DIALOGUE III.**  
*Charles and George.*  
*Charles.*

**WELL,** George, if you please, we will renew the subject of reading and repeating. But first, let me request you will not hope for any improvement, without diligence and attention.

*Geo.* I mean to use both, as I am sensible how much it will be for my advantage.

*Char.* If this be the case, you cannot be ignorant that it will be treating me very ill, if you be careless or negligent; in short, my dear George, without a desire to improve, you cannot attain it; and if you are not resolved to use your utmost endeavours towards reading with propriety and grace, it would be much better you said so, that I may not loose my time, and your friends be disappointed in their expectations.

*Geo.* I have been too much mortified, to permit me to forget, that my future credit depends upon my present improvement.

16 *Introductory Dialogues.*

*Char.* Permit me then to observe, that different writings require to be differently read, and you must understand what you read, if you wish to do justice to the subject; for which reason I advise you, first to confine yourself to easy narrative pieces, which you must endeavour to deliver with propriety in your common manner of speaking; I mean free from any disagreeable tune whatever.

*Geo.* But pray Charles, how am I to know when I read with a tune?

*Char.* By asking yourself this question—Do I read as I should speak, was I relating this from my own knowledge: and if upon consideration you find you do not, cease not to change your voice, till you obtain what is natural and common with you.—For you may rest assured, your reading will ever be disagreeable, when unnatural; and of course, this bad habit must be conquered, before you can read, or repeat, fit to be heard.

*Geo.* I shall think all my time lost, till I have banished this detested tune. But what is your objection to verie, Charles?

24

*Char.*

*Char.* Not at all, if you are not more subject to read verse with a tune; but as this is commonly the case, I recommend a few pathetic pieces in prose, till you have rooted up a weed, that must ever destroy the flowers of speech.

*Geb.* I am now sensible how disgusting it is.

*Char.* I am glad you are; but there is one bad effect which it has, that I apprehend has not come under your consideration.

*Geb.* Pray what is that?

*Char.* It in a great measure prevents your understanding what you read, and never fails to rob any subject of force and beauty.

*Geb.* That I am sure it does, or I could not have so frequently read, without being any way concerned, those pieces, which affect me so much when you repeat them.

*Char.* You will not wonder at this, if you will but give yourself time to think, how much more attention is in general paid to the voice and manner, than to the words. And if so, how necessary those aids must be to the best writings.

*Geo.* I am certain it is as you say; for when my father speaks in an angry tone of voice, if I do not understand perfectly his words, yet I am as sensible of his displeasure, by his voice and manner, as though I heard every syllable. Nor can I ever think so much of his words as of his change of voice.

*Char.* In this you are right; for the same words said in a different voice and manner, may have very opposite meanings.—Which I hope will prove to you, the absolute necessity of paying attention to the sense and meaning the author wishes to convey.

*Geo.* I never thought of it till lately, but I am now sensible how very different I have read several subjects, from what the writers of them ever intended.

*Char.* In order to avoid this for the future, you should endeavour to attain a lively sense of what you read, and let your aim be to deliver those sentiments, as if you were really interested in them.—For nothing can be more absurd, than reading or repeating pieces, expressive of the passions, in an un-

unmeaning unconcerned way, which will never interest, and of course can never please any audience.

*Geo.* I shall be very happy if I can acquire the right management of the voice, and like Henry, make it appear as though all I repeated was my own for this I am sure was what engaged the company so much in his favour.

*Char.* Certainly it was; for if you remember, in one part he seemed quite angry, and in another part, ready to sink with grief, when his words were expressive of those passions.

*Geo.* Yes, Charles, I remember very well, for he seemed to feel every word he said, and I observed how his voice changed, as though something had happened that really affected him in that manner.

**DIA.**

Hinc dicitur quae harmonie genitissima  
dialogorum est, et hoc est deinde deinceps  
**DIALOGUE IV.**

Interponit **Charles** et **George**.

**Charles.**

**FROM** your late observations, **George**,  
I doubt not you will soon gain a power  
of adapting your voice to any subject.

**Geo.** This encouragement gives me pleasure,  
as I earnestly wish to obtain so desirable  
an accomplishment, by which means, I shall  
have it in my power to oblige my friends, and  
when called upon I shall not be ashamed.

**Char.** Forget not then, that the voice is  
the language of nature, and paints every  
passion.—It speaks the feelings of the soul,  
and by its changes, more than words, ex-  
presses all the passions.—For instance, were  
you to come to me, and say, “ I am ex-  
“ tremely distressed, on account of a shock-  
“ ing misfortune, which has just happened  
“ to a friend of mine.”—I could have no  
reason to doubt you, if your look, manner,  
and tone of voice, were dull, mournful,  
and expressive of grief. But if on the con-  
trary,

trary, you were to come with a lively air, and a brisk, cheerful tone of voice, how could I think otherwise, than that you were jesting with me, and did not feel any anxiety upon the occasion?

*Geo.* True, I could not expect you to believe me.

*Char.* Does not this then shew you, the absolute necessity of the voice and manner corresponding with the words?

*Geo.* Yes, so plainly, that from the instance you have given, I observe, the voice and manner may be a direct contradiction to the words.

*Char.* And in that case, which do you think would be believed?

*Geo.* The voice and manner, no doubt, for you could not imagine me much afflicted with sorrow, when you heard me speak cheerfully, and beheld me all gaiety in my manner.

*Char.* But if on the contrary, you accompanied this lively air with an account of some fortunate event, which occasioned you to rejoice, your words would gain immediate credit.

credit and attention; as your voice, &c. would show, you felt those pleasing sensations you expressed.

*Geo.* I understand you; I am to be grave, gay, angry, sharp, dull, brisk, or, in short, agreeable to the subject, and as the author would have been, had we heard him say those things which he has given us in print.

*Char.* Most assuredly, or your reading will not be pleasing to the company.

*Geo.* But in respect to poetry, what have you to observe?

*Char.* First, that rhyme is generally esteemed more easy to remember, though I think more frequently accompanied with a disagreeable tune, which you now will aim to avoid. Like prose, it requires that you are careful in observing your stops, and that you do not drop your voice, so as to make it troublesome to attend to you.

*Geo.* But blank verse seems to me very hard, and I never can read it tolerably.

*Char.* That I do not wonder at; for I observe you never stop, but at the points, which prosaic reading destroys all the harmony of its numbers.

*Geo.*

*Geo.* Pray, should it not be thus read?

*Char.* The printing alone will inform you otherwise, if you attend to it; for if it was not intended to be noticed in the reading, the writer and printer would be at liberty to fill each line, as in prose.

*Geo.* In this then has been my error, for I have always run forward till I came to a point.

*Char.* Of what use then, did you think its having but a certain number of syllables in a line, or for what reason did you think the lines were thus contracted?

*Geo.* I never, once thought of it, and therefore I always made it appear as non-sense; but I beg you will tell me how I shall read it better?

*Char.* By stopping, not only at the points, but at the end of every line, about half as long as at a comma; this will mark the conclusion of each line, and preserve the measure and harmony.

*Geo.* I have not heard of this stop before; pray has it a name?

*Char.*

*Char.* Yes; it is called the stop of suspension, without which, it is impossible to read blank verse with propriety.

*Geo.* Why is it named the stop of suspension?

*Char.* For this reason, which you will do well to observe—It suspends, but does not alter the voice.

*Geo.* Then I find it is only intended to mark the end of a line, where there is no stop.

*Char.* Nothing more; but without attention to this imaginary point, as well as to real ones, you can never do justice to poetry.

*Geo.* For my own sake, I notice those stops I have been acquainted with, as I never can understand what I read without.

*Char.* And if you wish others to understand you, you must speak clear and distinct.

*Geo.* If agreeable, I will learn a few pieces, and show you in my manner of repeating them, how great attention I pay to your instructions.

*Char.*

*Char.* I am much obliged to you, my dear George, and cannot but approve this method, particularly if you copy after a good example. I therefore wish you may take every opportunity of improving yourself this way, and I doubt not you will be happy in the attainment of that pleasing accomplishment.

*Geo.* Will you do me the favour to hear me?

*Char.* When you please; and I beg the pieces may be as different as possible, both with respect to authors and subjects, which will not fail to assist and approve you, in various readings.

*Geo.* I have no objection to this power. This power, however, will be of great service to me in my present situation; for it will enable me to copy any part of any book, or any paper, or any manuscript, or any printed work, or any other document, with perfect accuracy, and without any difficulty. I shall be very glad to receive your advice upon this subject, and to have your assistance in any way you can afford me.

**PRO.**

ye boy or begilde down me I wuld  
**PROSAICK PIECES.**

**C H A P . I.**

*Introduction to Oeconomy of Human Life.*

BOW down your heads unto the dust, O ye inhabitants of earth! be silent, and receive, with reverence, instruction from on high.

Wheresoever the sun doth shine, wherefover the wind doth blow, wheresoever there is an ear to hear, and a mind to conceive; there let the precepts of life be made known, let the maxims of truth be honoured and obeyed.

All things proceed from God. His power is unbounded; his wisdom is from eternity; and his goodness endureth for ever.

He sitteth on his throne in the centre; and the breath of his mouth giveth life to the world.

He toucheth the stars with his finger, and they run their course rejoicing.

On

PROSAICK PIECES. 21

On the wings of the wind he walketh abroad, and performeth his will through all the regions of unlimited space.

Order, and grace, and beauty, spring from his hand.

The voice of wisdom speaketh in all his works; but the human understanding comprehendeth it not.

The shadow of knowledge passeth over the mind of man as a dream: he seeth as in the dark; he reasoneth, and is deceived.

But the wisdom of God is as the light of heaven; he reasoneth not; his mind is the fountain of truth.

Justice and mercy wait before his throne; benevolence and love enlighten his countenance for ever.

Who is like unto the Lord in glory? Who in power shall contend with the Almighty? Hath he any equal in wisdom? Can any goodness be compared unto him?

He it is, O man! who hath created thee; thy station on earth is fixed by his appointment: the powers of thy mind are the gifts

of his goodness; the wonders of thy frame  
are the work of his hand.

Hear then his voice, for it is gracious;  
and he that obeyeth, shall establish his soul  
in peace.

### C H A P. II.

#### *On Contentment, Employment of Time, &c.*

LET the shepherd enjoy his peace, his  
meadows, and his eaten pipe. Let the  
honest artificer pursue his trade with cheer-  
ful industry, and rejoice that the weight of  
states and kingdoms does not lie upon his  
shoulders. Let the man of a middle sta-  
tion know his happiness, in possessing with  
quiet obscurity, all the comforts of society  
and domestic life, with leisure and advan-  
tage for making the noblest improvements  
of the mind. Let the rich and great still  
look higher, and instead of repining at  
“Ceremony, the Idol Ceremony!”  
which debars them of those free and hum-  
ble joys, delight themselves with their ex-  
tensive

## PROSAICK PIECES. 23

tensive power of doing good, and diffusing happiness around them.

What an alternative is put into the choice of man! By employment or misuse of the faculties assigned him, he may rise to what dignity, or sink to what baseness he will, in the class of moral beings. Human existence is an inestimable gem, capable of receiving whatever polish we will please to give it: and if heightened with the diligence it ought, will shine in due time with lustre more dazzling than the stars.

It would not be fantastical (for its foundation is in truth and reality) to form a scale of nobility very different from the common distinctions of birth, titles, and fortune; and wholly according to that figure persons make in the moral world, and according to their various degrees of improvement and usefulness. The change would not be total. Many, who are now high in life, would continue so: but not a few would be strangely degraded.

TALBOT.

C H A P.

## C H A P III.

*On the Improvement of the Faculties.*

In numberless ways, does the bewildered race of man deviate from the paths of felicity and glory, and childishly squander away inestimable advantages. For just in proportion to the improvement of those faculties, with which heaven has intrusted us, our beings are ennobled, and our happiness heightened. The enjoyments of a mere animal existence are flat and low. The comforts of plain ordinary life, in those who have some feelings of the connexions of society, but no idea of any thing higher, rise in the next degree. The pleasures of an improved imagination, take in a circle vastly wider and more fair. The joys of a benevolent heart, animated by an active diligent spirit, refined sentiments, and affections justly warm, exceed the most gay imagination. The strong sense, and genuine love of truth and goodness, with all those noblest dispositions, that fill a mind affected and penetrated,

## PROSAICK PIECES. 25

trated, as it ought to be, with a sense of religion, and practising every part of christian duty, ascends still higher, and raises humanity to that point, from which it begins to claim a near alliance with superior natures.

TALBOT.

## C H A P IV.

### *On Pleasing in Company.*

ONE great reason why people succeed little in the art of pleasing, while they seem wholly possest by the ambition of shining, is their not observing proper rules of place and time. They shine, indeed, in their own eyes extremely; but they do not suit their manners to the taste of those, with whom they converse. Whatever is their favourite and superior accomplishment, they are apt to imagine a sufficient recommendation, wherever they go; when probably there are a thousand less striking, which, properly placed, would make them appear with infinitely more advantages. Nor is even the favourite accomplishment

C

by

## 26 PROSAICK PIECES.

by this means lost; for when once you have condescended to win people's esteem, in their own way, they are willing enough to see every additional grace in your character, and dwell upon it with pleasure.

TALBOT.

## CHAP. V.

### *On the Advantages of Virtue.*

BAD as the world is, respect is always paid to virtue. In the usual course of human affairs, it will be found that a plain understanding, joined with acknowledged worth, contributes more to prosperity, than the brightest parts, without probity or honour. Whether science, or business, or public life, be your aim, virtue still enters for a principal share into all those great departments of society. It is connected with eminence, in every liberal art; with reputation, in every branch of fair and useful business; with distinction, in every public station. The vigour which it gives the mind, and the weight which it adds to

character; the generous sentiments which it breathes; the undaunted spirit which it inspires; the ardour of diligence which it quickens; the freedom which it procures from pernicious and dishonourable avocations; are the foundations of all that is high in fame, or great in success among men.

Whatever ornamental or engaging endowments you now possess, virtue is a necessary requisite, in order to their shining with proper lustre. Feeble are the attractions of the fairest form, if it be suspected that nothing within corresponds to the pleasing appearance without. Short are the triumphs of wit, when it is supposed to be the vehicle of malice. By whatever arts you may at first attract the attention, you can hold the esteem, and secure the hearts of others, only by amiable dispositions, and the accomplishments of the mind, these are the qualities of the mind. These are the qualities, whose influence will last when the lustre of all that once sparkled and dazzled has passed away.

C 2 Let

28 PROSAICK PIECES.

Let not then the season of youth be barren of improvements, so essential to your future felicity and honour. Now is the seed-time of life; and according to *what you sow, you shall reap*. Your character is now, under divine assistance, of your own forming; your fate is, in some measure, put into your own hands. Your nature is as yet pliant and soft: habits have not established their dominion: prejudices have not pre-occupied your understanding. The world has not had time to contract and debase your affections. All your powers are more vigorous, disengaged, and free, than they will be at any future period.

BLAIR.

C H A P VI.

*On Truth and Falsehood.*

**A**S you value the approbation of heaven, or the esteem of the world, cultivate the love of truth. In all your proceedings, be direct and consistent. Ingenuity and candour possess the most powerful charm; they

## PROSAICK PIECES. 29

they bespeak universal favour, and carry an apology for almost every failing. *The lip of truth, shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue, is but for a moment* \*. The path of truth, is a plain and a safe path; that of falsehood, is a perplexing maze. After the first departure from sincerity, it is not in your power to stop. One artifice unavoidably leads on to another; till, as the intricacy of the labyrinth increases, you are left entangled in your own snare. Deceit discovers a little mind, which stops at temporary expedients, without rising to comprehensive views of conduct. It betrays, at the same time, a dastardly spirit. It is the resource of one who wants courage to avow his designs, or to rest upon himself. Whereas openness of character displays that generous boldnes, which ought to distinguish youth.

BLAIR.

\* Prov. xii. 19.

## C H A P. VII.

*Beauty and Deformity.*

A Youth, who lived in the country, and who had not acquired, either by reading or conversation, any knowledge of the animals which inhabit foreign regions, came to Manchester to see an exhibition of wild beasts. The size and figure of the elephant struck him with awe, and he viewed the rhinoceros with astonishment. But his attention was soon withdrawn from these animals, and directed to another of the most elegant and beautiful form, and he stood contemplating with silent admiration the glossy smoothness of his hair, the blackness and regularity of the streaks with which he was marked, the symmetry of his limbs, and above all, the placid sweetness of his countenance. What is the name of this lovely animal, said he to the keeper, which you have placed near one of the ugliest beasts in your collection, as if you meant to contrast beauty with deformity? Beware,

young

young man, replied the intelligent keeper, of being so easily captivated with external appearance. The animal which you admire, is called a tiger; and notwithstanding the meekness of his looks, he is fierce and savage beyond description; I can neither terrify him by correction, nor tame him by indulgence. But the other beast, which you despise, is in the highest degree docile, affectionate and useful. For the benefit of man, he traverses the sandy deserts of Arabia, where drink and pasture are seldom to be found; and will continue six or seven days without sustenance, yet still patient of labour. His hair is manufactured into clothing; his flesh is deemed wholesome nourishment; and their milk is much valued by the Arabs. The camel, therefore, for such is the name given to this animal, is more worthy of your admiration than the tyger, notwithstanding the inelegance of his make, and the two bunches upon his back. For mere external beauty is of little estimation; and deformity, when associated with amiable dispositions and useful qualities,

## 32 PROSAICK PIECES.

ties, does not preclude our respect and approbation.

PERCIVAL.

### C H A P. VIII.

#### *The affecting Interview.*

**I**N the year 1756, the notoriously infamous pirate Angria, had his strong fortress of Geriah, in the vicinity of Bombay, taken by a squadron under the command of admiral Watson, and the land-forces commanded by colonel (afterward lord) Clive.

Angria himself escaped, having left the fort three days before it was attacked, but committed the government thereof to one of his wives brothers, under whose care also he put his mother, two wives, and both his children.

Admiral Watson, soon after the reduction of the place, took an opportunity of visiting these unfortunate captives; and the interview between them was beyond measure affecting. Upon his entering their house, the whole family made a grand salaam, or

reve-

reverential bending of their bodies, touching the very ground with their faces, and shedding floods of tears. The admiral desired them to be comforted ; adding, “ That they were now under his protection ; ” and that no kind of injury should be “ done them.” They then again made the salaam. The mother of Angria, though strongly affected with these testimonies of goodness and humanity, yet could not help crying out, “ That the people had no king, “ she no son, her daughter no husband, “ the children no father !” The admiral replied, “ That from henceforward they must “ look upon him as their father and their “ friend.” Upon which the youngest child, a boy of about six years old, sobbing, said, “ Then you shall be my father ; ” and immediately took the admiral by the hand, and called him “ Father.” This action of the child’s was so very affecting, it quite overpowered that brave, that good man’s heart, and he found himself under a necessity of turning from the innocent youth for

C 5 a while,

## 34 PROSAICK PIECES.

a while, to prevent the falling of those tears,  
which stood ready to gush from his eyes.

IVES.

## C H A P. IX.

*Dialogue.*

**W**HAT have you done, this summer?  
Rode, and laughed, and fretted.

What did you intend to do?

To learn geography, mathematics, decimal fractions, and good humour: to work a screen, draw copies of two or three fine prints, and read abundance of history: to improve my memory, and restrain my fancy: to let out my time to the best advantage: to be happy myself, and make every body else so. To read Voltaire's Newton, Whiston's Euclid, and Tillotson's Sermons.

Have you read nothing?

Yes: some of the Sermons; Mrs. Rowe's Works; the Tale of a Tub; a Book of Dr. Watts's; L'Histoire du Ciel; Milton, and abundance of Plays, and idle books.

Do

PROSAICK PIECES. 35

Do you remember nothing of your geography?

Not so much as what belongs to England.

Mathematics—

Turn my head.

And what is your find head good for?

To wear a pair of Bruffels lappets, or spin out extravagant imaginations and fancies.

How does your arithmetic go on?

I have bought one of the best books on the subject.

And studied it?

O no: I have not read a page in it..

This is the way too in which you study natural history?

Yes: I have bought Reaumur's Works, and set them on my shelves.

Well: but are you good humoured?

O yes: mightily so, when I am pleased and entertained.

But a trifle puts you out of humour?

Yes, perhaps it does: but then, I am ten times more out of humour with myself than with other people.

36 PROSAICK PIECES.

So that, upon the whole, you are satisfied with your temper?

Very tolerably, as the world goes.

And do you not think at all vain?

I do not think what is commonly called vanity, so terrible a thing, as it is generally reckoned.

What do you mean by this?

I mean, that if it were possible, people ought to be as well acquainted with their own characters, at least, as with those of other persons; and therefore ought to know their good qualities, as well as their faults.

TALBOT.

C H A P. X.

*On Pleasure.*

I Cannot help looking upon pleasure, as a real, and amiable being, and blessing the author of nature, who has created this charmer to lead man on towards final happiness through, as Shakespear calls it, this worky-day world. The soft enchantress waves her wand, and all nature appears drest

drest in smiles and elegance. Sweet smells, gay colours, musical notes, are diffused through the whole globe. Every thing is beautiful in its season. All we have to do, is to open our minds to so rich a variety of delightful impressions : to accommodate ourselves with joy and thankfulness to the present scene, whatever it is, and to make the most of that good, which every thing has in it. To a free mind all is agreeable ; but violent attachments to any particular objects, narrow the soul, and lessen its capacity for enjoyment.

TALBOT.

## C H A P. XI.

### *The Benefits of Devotion.*

THE pleasures of sense resemble a foaming torrent, which, after a disorderly course, speedily runs out, and leaves an empty and offensive channel. But the pleasures of devotion resemble the equable current of a pure river, which enlivens the fields

38 PROSATICK PIECES.

fields through which it passes, and diffuses verdure and fertility along its banks. To thee, O Devotion! we owe the highest improvement of our nature, and much of the employment of our life. Thou art the support of our virtue, and the rest of our souls, in this turbulent world. Thou compest the thoughts: thou calmest the passions: thou exaltest the heart. Thy communications, and thine only, are imparted to the low, no less than to the high; to the poor, as well as to the rich. In thy presence worldly distinctions cease; and under thy influence, worldly sorrows are forgotten. Thou art the balm of the wounded mind. Thy sanctuary is ever open to the miserable; inaccessible only to the unrighteous and impure. Thou beginnest on earth, the temper of heaven. In thee, the hosts of angels and blessed spirits eternally rejoice.

BLAIR.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

*On the Disposition of the Heart.*

IT is an error to place devotion in the mere performance of any external act of worship. Prayer and praise, together with the ordinances peculiar to the Christian religion, are the appointed means of raising the heart toward the Supreme Being. They are the instituted signs of devotion; the language in which it expresses itself. But let us remember, that they are signs and expressions only; and we all know, that, in various cases, these may not correspond to the thing signified. It is in the disposition of the heart, not in the motion of the lips, or in the posture of the body, that devotion consists. The heart may pray or praise, when no words are uttered. But if the heart be unconcerned, or ill affected, all the words we can utter, how properly framed soever, are no other than empty and unacceptable sounds in the ear of the Almighty.

BLAIR.

C H A P.

## C H A P. A XIII.

*The Captive Hero.*

THE Romans, in the reign of Claudius, began to think seriously of reducing the Britons under their dominion. The expedition for this purpose was conducted in the beginning by Plautius and other commanders, with that success which usually attended the Roman arms.

Caractacus was the first who seemed willing, by a vigorous effort, to rescue his country, and repel its insulting and rapacious conquerors. This rude soldier, though with inferior forces, continued, for above nine years, to oppose and harass the Romans; till at length he was totally routed, and taken prisoner by Ostorius Scapula, who sent him in triumph to Rome. While Caractacus was leading through Rome, he appeared no way dejected at the amazing concourse of spectators that were gathered upon this occasion, but casting his eyes on the splendours that surrounded him, "Alas," cried

cried he, “ how is it possible that a people possessed of such magnificence at home, could envy me an humble cottage in Britain!” The emperor was affected with the British hero’s misfortunes, and won by his address. He ordered him to be unchained upon the spot, and set at liberty, with the rest of the captives.

HIST. OF ENGLAND.

### C H A P. XIV.

#### *The Death of Darius.*

AFTER Alexander’s last battle with Darius, only sixty horsemen were able to keep up with him till he reached the enemy’s camp. There they rode over the gold and silver that lay scattered about, and passing by a number of carriages full of women and children, which were in motion, but without charioteers, they hastened to the leading squadrons, not doubting that they should find Darius among them. At last, after much search, they found him extended

42 PROSAICK PIECES.

tended on his chariot, and pierced with many darts. Though he was near his last moments, he had strength to ask for something to quench his thirst. A Macedonian, named Polystratus, brought him some cold water, and when he had drank, he said, "Friend, this fills up the measure of my misfortunes, to think I am not able to reward thee for this act of kindness. But Alexander will not let thee go without a recompence; and the gods will reward Alexander for his humanity to my mother, to my wife and children. Tell him I gave him my hand, for I give it thee in his stead." So saying, he took the hand of Polystratus, and immediately expired. When Alexander came up, he showed his concern for that event by the strongest expressions, and covered the body with his own robe.

PLUT. IN ALEX.

CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

*On Absence, Solitude, and Friendship.*

WHEN the heart has long been used to the delightful society of beloved friends, how dreadful is absence, and how irksome solitude. But these phantoms of absence and solitude vanish before the sunshine of religion. Every change of life, every variety of place allotted us by an all-ruling Providence, grows welcome to us; and while we consider ourselves and our friends, however distant, as equally under the care and protection of the same gracious and omnipresent Being, our common Creator, Redeemer, and Preserver, the distance between us, with all its terrors, is annihilated: while solitude and retirement gives us but the opportunity for a wider range of thought on subjects that enoble friendship itself. Then may our minds look forward, through an endless succession of ages, in which the spirits of just men made perfect, renewing in a happier world the affectionate

en-

44 PROSAICK PIECES.

engagements, just begun, as it were, in the days of their mortality, shall rejoice in one another's continually improving happiness and goodness to all eternity. Blessed mansions, where we shall meet again all those beloved persons whose remembrance is so dear to us ! Our friendship shall then, probably, be extended through the whole society of the blest. Every one amiable, every one benevolent, how can it be otherwise ? The excellent, of all ages and nations, shall then be numbered among our friends. Angels themselves will not disdain to admit us to their friendship. Beyond all these glories, we may still raise our thoughts to the supreme Friend and Father, till they are lost in the dazzling, but delightful contemplation.

When so fair a superstructure rises from so firm a basis, who but would build their friendship on this everlasting rock ? But, alas ! the slight connections of the trifling world, are but like those wooden buildings raised suddenly for pompous festivals, adorned with every elegance and splendour for a day,

day, and with all the mimikry of marble pillars, and the most solid architecture. The least accident destroys them at once: and a very short time, of course, sees the spot, where they were erected, forlorn and bare.

TALBOT.

## C H A P. XVI.

### *Religion Universal.*

IF there be any impression which man is formed by nature to receive, it is a sense of religion. As soon as his mind opens to observation and reflection, he discerns innumerable marks of his dependent state. He finds himself placed, by some superior power, in a vast world, where the wisdom and goodness of the Creator are conspicuous on every side. The magnificence, the beauty and order of nature, excite him to admire and adore. When he looks up to that omnipotent hand which operates throughout the universe, he is prompted to gratitude. The expressions of those affections under the various forms of religious worship, are

no

46 PROSAICK PIECES.

no other than native effusions of the human heart. Ignorance may mislead, and superstition may corrupt them; but their origin is derived from sentiments that are essential to man.

Cast your eyes over the whole earth. Explore the most remote quarters of the east or the west. You may discover tribes of men without policy, or laws, or cities, or any of the arts of life; but no where will you find them without some form of religion. In every region you behold the prostrate worshipper, the temple, the altar, and the offering. Wherever men have existed, they have been sensible that some acknowledgment was due, on their part, to the Sovereign of the world.

BLAIR.

C H A P. XVII.

*On Industry, and the Improvement of Time.*

DILIGENCE, industry, and proper improvement of time, are material duties of the young. To no purpose are they endowed

dowed with the best abilities, if they want activity for exerting them. Unavailing, in this case, will be every direction that can be given them, either for their temporal or spiritual welfare. In youth, the habits of industry are most easily acquired. In youth, the incentives to it are strongest, from ambition and from duty, from emulation and hope; from all the prospects which the beginning of life affords. If, dead to these calls, you already languish in slothful inaction, what will be able to quicken the more sluggish current of advancing years?

Industry is not only the instrument of improvement, but the foundation of pleasure. Nothing is so opposite to the true enjoyment of life, as the relaxed and feeble state of an indolent mind. He who is a stranger to industry, may possess, but he cannot enjoy; for it is labour only which gives the relish to please; it is the appointed vehicle of every good to man; it is the indispensable condition of our possessing a sound mind, in a sound body. Sloth is so inconsistent with both, and it is

hard

## 48 PROSAICK PIECES.

hard to determine whether it be a greater foe to virtue, or to health and happiness. Inactive as it is in itself, its effects are fatally powerful. Though it appears a slowly flowing stream, yet it undermines all that is stable and flourishing. It not only saps the foundation of every virtue, but pours upon you a deluge of crimes and evils. It is like water, which first putrifies by stagnation, and then sends up noxious vapours, and fills the atmosphere with death.

Fly, therefore, from idleness, as the certain parent both of guilt and ruin.

BLAIR.

## C H A P. XVIII,

### *The Contrast, or Paulo and Avaro.*

**P**AULO and Avaro are men equally wealthy; but they differ in the use and application of their riches, which you immediately see upon entering their doors.

The habitation of Paulo has at once the air of a nobleman, and a merchant. You see the servants act with affection to their

master,

master, and satisfaction to themselves : the master meets you with an open countenance, full of benevolence and integrity ; your business is dispatched with that confidence and welcome, which always accompanies honest minds ; his table is the image of plenty and generosity, supported by justice and frugality. After we had dined here, our affair was to visit Avaro : out comes an awkward fellow with a careful countenance ; Sir, would you speak with my master ? May I crave your name ? After the first preamble, he leads us into a noble solitude, a great house that seemed uninhabited ; but from the end of the spacious hall moves toward us Avaro, with a suspicious aspect, as if he believed us thieves ; and as for my part, I approached him as if I knew him a cutpurse. We fell into discourse of his noble dwelling, and the great estate all the world knew he had to enjoy in it ; and I, to plague him, commended Paulo's way of living. Paulo, answered Avaro, is a very good man ; but we who have smaller estates, must cut our coat according to our cloth.

D

Nay.

## 50 PROSAICK PIECES.

Nay, says I, every man knows his own circumstances best; you are in the right if you have not wherewithal. He looked very foul; for it is you must know the utmost vanity of a mean-spirited rich man to be contradicted, when he calls himself poor. But I was resolved to vex him, by consenting to all he said, the main design of which was, that he would have us find out, he was one of the wealthiest men in London, and lived like a beggar. We left him, and took a turn upon the Change. My friend was grieved with Avaro: this (said he) is certainly a sly man. I contradicted him with much warmth, and summed up their different characters as well as I could. This Paulo, said I, grows wealthy by being a common good; Avaro, by being a general evil: Paulo has the art, Avaro the draft of trade. When Paulo gains, all men he deals with are the better: Whenever Avaro profits, another certainly loses. In a word, Paulo is a citizen, and Avaro a citizen. I convinced my friend, and carried the young gentleman the next day

## PROSIACK PIECES. 51

day to Paulo, where he will learn the way both to gain and enjoy a good fortune. And though I cannot say, I have, by keeping him from Avaro, saved him from the gallows, I have prevented his deserving it every day he lives: for with Paulo he will be an honest man, without being so for fear of the laws; as with Avaro, he would have been a villain within the protection of it.

TATLER.

## CHAP. XIX.

### *Prose Pastoral.*

PHILLIS and Damaris, were two country lasses, the pride of the village where they lived: both handsome to perfection, but exceedingly different. The unaffected Damaris, had no attention but to assist the infirmities of an aged parent, whom severe illness confined to his cottage, while she tended his flock by the wood-side. Her hands were generally employed in some useful work; and while she knit, or spun to procure her old father a more tolerable sub-

D 2

sistence,

sistence, the chearfulness of her songs expressed a contented heart. Her dress, though very poor, was always neat and clean; she studied no ornament in it, and if the neighbours commended her person, she lent them very little attention.

Phillis had been bred up under a careless mother; she was exceedingly pretty, and knew it mighty well. On holidays nobody so spruce as she. Her hat was wreathed with flowers or ribbands; every fountain was consulted for her dress, and every meadow ransacked to adorn it. From morning till night she was dancing, and sporting on the green: all the shepherds courted and admired her, and believed every word they said. Yet she felt many a discontent. Sometimes her garland would be less becoming than she wished it: sometimes she would fancy that a favourite shepherd slighted her, or that a new face was more admired than her's. Every day was spent in the pursuit of gaiety; and every day brought with it some disquiet. She was one morning sitting very pensive under a poplar,

poplar, tying up a nosegay, when she heard Damaris, who was concealed from her, only by the shade of some bushes, singing, with a merry heart, a song in praise of industry. Phillis could not help interrupting her in the midst of it; and when she went toward her, found her busy in plying the distaff, which was fixed on her side: when thus the maid began.

*Phillis.* How is it possible, Damaris, that you should be always so merry in leading a life of such drudgery? What charms can you find in it? How much better would it become your years to be dancing at the may-pole, where some rich farmer's son might probably fall in love with you.

*Damaris.* Ah, Phillis, I prefer this way of life, because I see you very unhappy in yours. For my own part I have never a moment's uneasiness. I am sensible I am doing what I ought. I see myself the comfort of a good old father, who supported my helpless infancy, and now wants this return of duty in his decrepid age. When I have penned the fold at night, I return

D 3 home,

54 PROSAICK PIECES.

home, and cheer him with my sight. I dress his little supper and partake of it, with more pleasure than you have at a feast. He in the mean time tells me stories of his younger days, and instructs me by his experience. Sometimes he teaches me a song, like that I was singing just now; and on holidays, I read to him out of some good book. This, Phillis, is my life. I have no great expectations, but every cheerful hope that can make the heart light and easy.

TALBOT.

C H A P. XX.

*Obidah, or the Journey of a Day.*

An Eastern Story.

O BIDAH, the son of Abensina, left the caravansera early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the vallies, and saw the hills gradually

## PROSAICK PIECES. 55

gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of Paradise; he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring: all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with

## 56 PROSAICK PIECES.

business, and to gain the rewards of diligence, without suffering its fatigues. He therefore still continued to walk for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop, by the music of the birds, whom the heat had assembled in the shade, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains, and murmuring with waterfalls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path, which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his

## PROSAICK PIECES. 57

his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might sooth and divert him. He listened to every echo; he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect; he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away unaccounted; his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not toward what point to travel.

He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to

## 58 PROSAICK PIECES.

seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power; to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrors of darkness and solitude surrounded him; the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills.

Work'd into sudden rage by wint'ry show'rs,  
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours;  
The mountain-shepherds hear the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whether he

he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or destruction. At length, not fear, but labour, began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled, and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced toward the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, ‘Tell me,’ said the hermit, ‘by what chance thou hast been brought hither; I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before.’ Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

‘Son,’ said the hermit, ‘let the errors and follies, the dangers and escape of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a

## 60 PROSAICK PIECES.

day. We rise in the morning of youth, full of vigour and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and with diligence, and travel on a while in the strait road of piety to the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens, and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to enquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for a while, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return.

But

## PROSAICK PIECES. 61

But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another ; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerse ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horror, with sorrow, with repentance ; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example, not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made ; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted ; that the wanderer may at length return after all his errors ; and that he who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and

62 PROSAICK PIECES.

and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose, commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence, and when the morning calls again to toil, begin a-new thy journey and thy life.

RAMBLER.

C H A P. XXI.

*On Pride.*

IF there be any thing which makes human nature appear ridiculous to beings of superior faculties, it must be pride. They know so well the vanity of those imaginary perfections that swell the heart of man, and of those little supernumerary advantages, whether in birth, fortune, or title, which one man enjoys above another, that it must certainly very much astonish, if it does not very much divert them, when they see a mortal puffed up and valuing himself above his neighbours on any of these accounts, at the same time that he is obnoxious to all the common calamities of the species.

To

To set this thought in its true light, we shall fancy, if you please, that yonder mole-hill is inhabited by reasonable creatures, and that every pismire (his shape and way of life only excepted) is endowed with human passions. How should we smile to hear one give an account of the pedigrees, distinctions, and titles that reign amongst them! Observe how the whole swarm divide, and make way for the pismire that passes through them! You must understand he is an emmet of quality, and has better blood in his veins than any pismire in the mole-hill. Do you not see how sensible he is of it, how slow he marches forward, how the whole rabble of ants keep their distance? Here you may observe one placed upon a little eminence, and looking down on a long row of labourers. He is the richest insect on this side the hillock: he has a walk of half a yard in length, and a quarter of an inch in breadth; he keeps one hundred menial servants, and has at least fifteen barley corns in his granary. He is now chiding and enslaving the emmet that stands before him, and who,

for

64 PROSAICK PIECES.

for all that we can discover, is as good an emmet as himself.

But here comes an insect of figure: do not you take notice of a little white straw that he carries in his mouth? That straw, you must understand, he would not part with for the longest tract about the mole-hill; did you but know what he has undergone to purchase it! See how the ants of all qualities and conditions swarm about him. Should this straw drop out of his mouth, you would see all this numerous circle of attendants follow the next that took it up, and leave the discarded insect, or run over his back to come at his successor.

If now you have a mind to see all the ladies of the mole-hill, observe first the pismire that listens to the emmet on her left-hand, at the same time that she seems to turn away her head from him. He tells this poor insect that she is a goddess; that her eyes are brighter than the sun; that life and death are at her disposal. She believes him, and gives herself a thousand little airs upon it. Mark the vanity of the pismire on her

her right-hand. She can scarcecrawl with age; but you must know she values herself upon her birth; and, if you mind, spurns at every one that comes within her reach. The little nimble coquette that is running along the fide of her, is a wit. She has broken many a pismire's heart. Do but observe what a drove of lovers are running after her.

We will here finish this imaginary scene; but first of all to draw the parallel closer, we will suppose, if you please, that death comes down upon the mole-hill, in the shape of a cock-sparrow, and picks up, without distinction, the pismire of quality and his flatterers, the pismire of substance and his day-labourers, the white-straw officer and his sycophants, with all the goddesses, wits, and beauties of the mole-hill.

May we not imagine that beings of superior natures and perfections regard all the instances of pride and vanity among our own species, in the same kind of view, when they take a survey of those who inhabit this earth; or in the language of an ingenious French

French poet, of those pismires that people  
this heap of dirt, which human vanity has  
divided into climates and regions.

GUARDIAN..

## C H A P T. XXII.

### *The Art of Happiness..*

A Good temper is one of the principal ingredients of happiness. This, it will be said, is the work of nature, and must be born with us: and so in a good measure it is; yet oftentimes it may be acquired by art and always improved by culture. Almost every object that attracts our notice, has its bright and its dark side: He that habituates himself to look at the displeasing side, will sour his disposition, and consequently impair his happiness; while he who constantly beholds it on the bright side, insensibly meliorates his temper, and in consequence of it, improves his own happiness, and the happiness of all about him.

Arachne and Melissa are two friends. They are both of them women in years, and alike

in

PROSAICK PIECES. 67

in birth, fortune, education, and accomplishments. They were originally alike in temper too; but by different management, are grown the reverse of each other. Arachne has accustomed herself to look only on the dark side of every object. If a new play or poem makes its appearance, with a thousand brilliancies, and but one or two blemishes, she slightly skims over the passages that should give her pleasure, and dwells upon those only that fill her with dislike. If you shew her a very excellent portrait, she looks at some part of the drapery, that has been neglected, or to a hand or finger which has been left unfinished. Her garden is a very beautiful one, and kept with great neatness and elegancy; but if you take a walk with her into it, she talks to you of nothing but blights and storms, of snails and caterpillars, and how impossible it is to keep it from the litter of falling leaves, and worm-casts. If you sit down in one of her temples, to enjoy a delightful prospect, she observes to you, that there is too much wood or too little water; that the day is too sunny, or too gloomy;

## 68 PROSAICK PIECES.

gloomy; that it is sultry or windy; and finishes with a long harangue upon the wretchedness of our climate. When you return with her to the company, in hopes of a little cheerful conversation, she casts a gloom over all, by giving you the history of her own bad health, or of some melancholy accident that has befallen one of her daughter's children. Thus she insensibly sinks her own spirits, and the spirits of all around her, and at last discovers she knows not why, that her friends are grave.

Melissa is the reverse of all this. By constantly habituating herself to look only on the bright side of objects, she preserves a perpetual cheerfulness in herself, which, by a kind of happy contagion, she communicates to all about her. If any misfortune has befallen her, she considers it might have been worse, and is thankful to Providence for an escape. She rejoices in solitude, as it gives her an opportunity of knowing herself; and in society, because she communicates the happiness she enjoys. She opposes every man's virtues to his failings, and can

find

## PROSAICK PIECES. 69

find out something to cherish and applaud in the very worst of her acquaintance. She opens every book with a desire to be entertained or instructed, and therefore seldom misses what she looks for. Walk with her, though it be but on a heath or a common, and she will discover numberless beauties, unobserved before, in the hills, the dales, the brooms, brakes, and the variegated flowers of weeds and poppies. She enjoys every change of weather and of season, as bringing with it something of health or convenience. In conversation, it is a rule with her never to start a subject that leads to any thing gloomy or disagreeable; you therefore never hear her repeating her own grievances, or those of her neighbours, or (what is worst of all) their faults and imperfections. If any thing of the latter kind be mentioned in her hearing, she has the address to turn it into entertainment, by changing the most odious railing into a pleasant raillery. Thus Melissa, like the bee, gathers honey from every weed; while Arachne, like the spider, sucks poison from the fairest flowers. The con-

## 70 PROSAICK PIECES.

consequence is, that of two tempers, once very nearly allied, the one is for ever sour and dissatisfied, the other always gay and cheerful: the one spreads an universal gloom; the other a continual sunshine.

There is nothing more worthy of our attention than this art of happiness. In conversation, as well as life, happiness very often depends upon the slightest incidents. The taking notice of the badness of the weather, a north-east wind, the approach of winter, or any trifling circumstance of the disagreeable kind, shall insensibly rob a whole company of its good humour, and fling every member of it into the vapours. If therefore we would be happy in ourselves, and are desirous of communicating that happiness to all about us, these minutiae of conversation ought carefully to be attended to. The brightness of the sky, the lengthening of the days, the increasing verdure of the spring, the arrival of any little piece of good news, or whatever carries with it the most distant glimpse of joy, shall frequently be the parent of a social and happy conversation.

## PROSAICK PIECES. 71

tion. Good manners exact from us this regard for our company. The clown may repine at the sunshine that ripens his harvest, because his turnips are burnt up by it; but the man of refinement will extract pleasure from the thunder storm to which he is exposed, by remarking on the plenty and refreshment, which may be expected from such a shower.

Thus does good manners as well as good sense, direct us to look at every object on the bright side; and by thus acting, we cherish and improve both the one and the other. By this practice it is that Melissa is become the wisest and the best-bred woman living: and by this practice may every man and woman arrive at that easy benevolence of temper, which the world calls good nature, and the scripture charity, whose natural and never failing fruit is happiness.

WORLD.

P O E.

**POETICK PIECES.****C H A P. I.***A Prayer for Indifference.*

By Mrs. GREVILLE.

**O**F T I've implor'd the gods in vain,

And pray'd till been weary ;

For once I'll try my wish to gain

Of Oberon the fairy.

Sweet airy being, wanton sprite,

That lurk'st in woods unseen,

And oft by Cynthia's silver light

Tripp'st gaily o'er the green;

If e'er thy pitying heart was mov'd,

As ancient stories tell,

And for the Athenian maid who lov'd,

Thou sough'st a wond'rous spell ;

Oh ! deign once more t' exert thy power ;

Haply some herb or tree,

Sov'reign as juice of western flower,

Conceals a balm for me.

I ask

## POETICK PIECES. 73

I ask no kind return of love,

No tempting charm to please:

Far from the heart those gifts remove,

That sighs for peace and ease.

Nor peace nor ease the heart can know,

Which, like the needle true,

Turns at the touch of joy or woe,

But, turning, trembles too.

Far as distress the soul can wound,

'Tis pain in each degree;

'Tis bliss but to a certain bound;

Beyond, is agony.

Take then this treacherous sense of mine,

Which dooms me still to smart;

Which pleasure can to pain refine,

To pains new pangs impart.

Ah ! haste to shed the sacred balm !

My shatter'd nerves new string ;

And for my guest, serenely calm,

The nymph Indifference bring.

At her approach, see hope, see fear,

See expectation fly,

And disappointment in the rear,

That blasts the promis'd joy.

E

The

SAHO

## 74 POETICK PIECES.

The tear which pity taught to flow,

The eye shall then disown;

The heart that melts for others woe,

Shall then scarce feel its own.

The wounds which now each moment bleed,

Each moment then shall close,

And tranquil days shall still succeed

To nights of calm repose.

O, fairy elf! but grant me this,

This one kind comfort send;

And so may never-fading bliss

Thy flow'ry paths attend!

So may the glow-worm's glimm'ring light,

Thy tiny footsteps lead

To some new region of delight,

Unknown to mortal tread.

And be thy acorn goblet fill'd

With heaven's ambrosial dew;

From sweetest, freshest flow'r's distill'd,

That shed fresh sweets for you.

And what of life remains for me,

I'll pass in sober ease;

Half-pleas'd, contented will I be,

Content but half to please.

CHAP.

## C H A P. II.

## Stanza.

**W**E L C O M E the real state of things;

Ideal world adieu; or general world

Where clouds pil'd up by fancy's hand,

Hang low'ring o'er each view.

Here the gay sunshine of content,

Shall gild each humble scene;

And life steal on, with gentle pace,

Beneath a sky serene.

Hesperian trees amidst my grove,

I ask not to behold;

Since ev'n from Ovid's song I know,

That dragons guard the gold.

Nor would I have the phoenix build,

In my poor elms his nest;

For where shall odorous gums be found

To treat the beauteous guest?

Henceforth no pleasure I desire

In any wild extreme,

Such as should lull the captiv'd mind

In a bewitching dream.

76 POETICK PIECES.

Friendship I ask, without caprice,  
When faults are over seen :  
Errors on both sides mix'd with truth,  
And kind good-will between.

Health, that may best its value prove,  
By slight returns of pain :  
Amusements to enliven life,  
Crosses to prove it vain.

TALBOT.

C H A P. III.

Corydon :—*A Pastoral.*

To the Memory of William Shenstone, Esq.

COME, shepherds ! we'll follow the hearse,  
We'll see our lov'd Corydon laid ;  
Tho' sorrow may blemish the verse,  
Yet let a sad tribute be paid.

They call'd him, the pride of the plain,  
In tooth he was gentle and kind !  
He mark'd on his elegant strain,  
The graces that glow'd in his mind.

On purpose he planted yon' trees,  
That birds in the covert might dwell ;  
He cultur'd his thyme for the bees,  
But never would rifle their cell.

Y

## POETICK PIECES. 77

Ye lambkins ! that play'd at his feet,  
Go bleat—and your master bemoan ;  
His music was artless and sweet,  
His manners as mild as your own.

No verdure shall cover the vale,  
No bloom on the blossoms appear ;  
The sweets of the forest shall fail,  
And winter discolour the year.

No birds in our hedges shall sing,  
(Our hedges, so vocal before !)  
Since he that should welcome the spring,  
Salutes the gay season no more.

His Phillis was fond of his praise,  
And poets came round in a throng ;  
They listen'd—they envy'd his lays,  
But which of them equall'd his song ?

Ye shepherds ! henceforward be mute,  
For lost is the pastoral strain ;  
So give me my Corydon's flute,  
And thus—let me break it in twain.

CUNNINGHAM.

E 3

CHAP.

## C H A P. IV.

Noon : — *A Pastoral.*

FERVID on the glitt'ring flood,  
Now the noon-tide radiance glows ;  
Drooping o'er its infant bud,  
Not a dew-drop's left the rose.

By the brook the Shepherd dines,  
From the fierce meridian heat,  
Shelter'd by the branching pines  
Pendent o'er his grassy seat.

Now the flock forsakes the glade,  
Where uncheck'd the sun-beams fall,  
Sure to find a pleasing shade  
By the ivy'd abbey-wall.

Echo, in her airy round,  
O'er the river, rock, and hill,  
Cannot catch a single sound  
Save the clack of yonder mill.

Cattle court the zephyr's bland  
Where the streamlet wanders cool ;  
Or with languid silence stand  
Midway in the marshy pool.

But

## POETICK PIECES. 79

But from mountain, dell, or stream,  
Not a flutt'ring zephyr springs ;  
Fearful lest the noontide beam  
Scorch its soft, its silken wings.

Not a leaf has leave to stir,  
Nature lull'd—serene—and still ;  
Quiet e'en the shepherd's cur,  
Sleeping on the heath-clad hill.

Languid is the landscape round,  
Till the fresh descending show'r,  
Grateful to the thirsty ground,  
Raises ev'ry fainting flow'r.

Now the hill—the hedge—is green,  
Now the warblers throats in tune !  
Blithsome is the verdant scene  
Brighten'd by the beams of noon !

CUNNINGHAM.

## C H A P. V.

### Evening : — *A Pastoral.*

O'ER the heath the heifer strays  
Free— (the furrow'd task is done)  
Now the village windows blaze,  
Burnish'd by the setting sun.

E 4

Now

80 POETICK PIECES.

Now he hides behind the hill,  
Sinking from a golden sky;  
Can the pencil's mimick skill  
Copy the refulgent dye?

Trudging as the ploughmen go,  
(To the smoking hamlet bound)  
Giant-like their shadows grow,  
Lengthen'd o'er the level ground.

Where the rising forest spreads  
Shelter for the lordly dome,  
To their high-built airy beds  
See the rooks returning home!

As the lark, with vary'd tune,  
Carols to the ev'ning loud,  
Mark the mild resplendent moon  
Breaking thro' a parted cloud!

How the hermit howlet peeps  
From the barn or twisted brake,  
And the blue mist slowly creeps,  
Curling on the silver lake!

As the trout in speckled pride,  
Playful from its bosom springs  
To the banks, a ruffled tide  
Verges in successive rings.

Trip-

## POETICK PIECES. 81

Tripping thro' the silken grass  
O'er the path-divided dale,  
Mark the rose-complexion'd lass  
With her well-pois'd milking pail.

Linnets with unnumber'd notes,  
And the cuckoo, bird with two;  
Tuning sweet their mellow throats,  
Bid the setting sun adieu.

CUNNINGHAM.

## C H A P. VI.

### *The Thrush and Pie : — A Tale.*

C O N C E A L'D within an hawthorn bush,  
We're told that an experienced thrush,  
Instructed in the prime of spring,  
Many a neighb'ring bird to sing:  
She caroll'd, and her various song  
Gave lessons to the lift'ning throng;  
But (th' entangling boughs between)  
'Twas her delight to teach unseen.

At length the litt'l wond'ring race,  
Would see their fav'rite face to face;  
They thought it hard to be deny'd,  
And begg'd that she'd no longer hide.

E 5

O'er

82 POETICK PIECES.

O'er modest, worth's peculiar fault.

Another shade the tut'ress sought,

And loth to be too much admir'd,

In secret from the bush retir'd.

An impudent presuming pie,  
Malicious, ignorant, and fly ;  
Stole to the matron's vacant seat,  
And in her arrogance elate  
Rush'd forward—with—“ My friends, you see  
“ The mistress of the choir in me,  
“ Here be your due devotion paid ;  
“ I am the songstress of the shade.”

A linnet that sat list'ning nigh,  
Made the imposter this reply :

“ I fancy, friend ! that vulgar throats,  
“ Were never form'd for warbling notes ;  
“ But if these lessons came from you  
“ Repeat them in the public view ;  
“ That your assertions may be clear,  
“ Let us behold, as well as hear.”

The length'ning song, the soft'ning strain,  
Our chatt'ring pie attempts in vain ;  
For to the fool's eternal shame  
All she could compass was a scream.

The birds, enrag'd, around her fly,  
Nor shelter, nor defence is high :

The

The caitiff wretch, distress'd—forlorn,  
On ev'ry side is peck'd and torn,  
'Till for her vile atrocious lies  
Under their angry beaks she dies.

CUNNINGHAM.

CHAP. VII.

*The Fox and Cat:—A Fable.*

THE fox and the cat, as they travell'd one day  
With moral discourses cut shorter the way;  
“ Tis great,” says the fox, “ to make justice  
our guide !”  
“ How god-like is mercy !” Grimalkin reply'd.

Whilst thus they proceeded—a wolf from the  
wood,

Impatient of hunger, and thirsting for blood,  
Rush'd forth—as he saw the dull shepherd asleep,  
And seiz'd for his supper an innocent sheep.  
“ In vain, wretched victim ! for mercy you bleat ;  
“ When mutton's at hand,” says the wolf, “ I must  
eat.”

Grimalkin's astonish'd—the fox stood aghast,  
To see the fell beast at his bloody repast.  
“ What a wretch !” says the cat—“ It is the vilest  
of brutes !

Does he feed upon flesh, when there's herbage—and  
roots ?”

84 POETICK PIECES.

Cries the fox—"While our oaks give us acorns so  
good,

"What a tyrant is this to spill innocent blood!"

Well, onward they march'd, and they moraliz'd  
still,

Till they came where some poultry pick'd chaff  
by a mill;

Sly reynard survey'd them with glutinous eyes,  
And made (spite of morals) a pullet his prize.

A mouse too, that chanc'd from her covert to stray,  
The greedy grimalkin secur'd as her prey.

A spider that sat in her web on the wall  
Perceiv'd the poor victims, and pity'd their fall;  
She cry'd—"Of such murders how guiltless am I!"  
So ran to regale on a new taken fly.

MORAL.

The faults of our neighbours with freedom we blame.  
But tax not ourselves tho' we practise the same.

CUNNINGHAM.

CHAP.

## C H A P. VIII.

*An Epistle.*

To a Friend in Town.

HAVE my friends in the town, in the gay busy town,

Forgot such a man as John Dyer ?

Or heedless despise they, or pity the clown,

Whose bosom no pageantries fire ?

No matter, no matter—content in the shades—

(Contented !—why every thing charms me)

Fall in tunes all a down the green steep, ye cascades !

Till hence rigid virtue alarms me.

Till outrage arises, or misery needs

The swift, the intrepid avenger ;

Till sacred religion or liberty bleeds,

Then mine be the deed and the danger.

Alas ! what a folly, what wealth and domain

We heap up in sin and in sorrow !

Immense is the toil, yet the labour how vain !

Is not life to be over to-morrow ?

Then glide on my moments, the few that I have,

Smooth-shaded, and quiet, and ev'n,

While gently the body descends to the grave,

And the spirits arises to heav'n.

DYER.

C H A P.

## C H A P. IX.

## Ophelia's Urn.

**T**hrough the dim veil of ev'ning's dusky shade,  
 Near some lone fane, or yew's funereal green,  
 What dreary forms has magic fear survey'd !  
 What shrouded spectres superstition seen !  
 But you secure shall pour your sad complaint,  
 Nor dread the meagre phantom's wan array ;  
 What none but fear's officious hand can paint,  
 What none but superstition's eye survey.  
 The glimm'ring twilight and the doubtful dawn,  
 Shall see your step to these sad scenes return :  
 Constant, as crystal dews impearl the lawn,  
 Shall Strephon's tear bedew Ophelia's urn.  
 Sure nought unhallow'd shall presume to stray  
 Where sleep the relicks of that virtuous maid :  
 Nor aught unlovely bend its devious way,  
 Where soft Ophelia's dear remains are laid.  
 Happly thy muse, as with unceasing sighs  
 She keeps forgiveness of Ophelia's shade ;  
 " Why has such worth without distinction dy'd ?"  
 " Why, like the desert's lily, bloom'd to fade ? "

When

## POETICK PIECES. 87

When young simplicity, averse to feign,  
Shall unmolested breathe her softest sigh ;  
And candour with unwonted warmth complain,  
And innocence indulge a wailful cry.

Then elegance, with coy judicious hand,  
Shall cull fresh flow'rets for Ophelia's tomb !  
And beauty chide the fate's severe command,  
That shew'd the frailty of so fair a bloom !

And fancy then, with wild ungovern'd woe,  
Shall her lov'd pupil's native taste explain :  
For mournful sable all her hues forego,  
And ask sweet solace of the muse in vain !

Ah ! gentle forms, expect no fond relief ;  
Too much the sacred nine their loss deplore :  
Well may ye grieve, nor find an end of grief—  
Your best, your brightest fav'rite is no more.

SHENSTONE.

## C H A P. X.

### *The Country Box.*

THE wealthy cit, grown old in trade,  
Now wishes for the rural shade,  
And buckles to his one-horse chair  
Old dobbin, or the founder'd mare ;  
While wedg'd in closely by his side  
Sits madam, his unwieldy bride,

With

88 POETICK PIECES.

With Jacky on a stool before 'em,  
And out they jog in due decorum.  
Scarce past the turnpike half a mile,  
How all the country seems to smile !  
And as they slowly jog together,  
The cit commends the road and weather ;  
While madam doats upon the trees,  
And long for ev'ry house she sees,  
Admires its views, its situation,  
And thus she opens her oration :

What signify the loads of wealth,  
Without that richest jewel, health ?  
Excuse the fondness of a wife,  
Who doats upon your precious life !  
Such ceaseless toil, such constant care,  
Is more than human strength can bear ;  
One may observe it in your face—  
Indeed my dear, you break apace :  
And nothing can your health repair,  
But exercise and country air.  
Sir Traffic has a house, you know,  
About a mile for Cheney-row ;  
He's a good man, indeed, 'tis true,  
But not so rich, my dear, as you :  
And folks are always apt to sneer—  
One would not be out-done, my dear !

Sir Traffic's name so well apply'd  
Awak'd his brother-merchant's pride ;

And

## POETICK PIECES. 89

And Thrifty, who had all his life  
Paid utmost deference to his wife,  
Confess'd her arguments had reason,  
And by th' approaching summer season,  
Draws a few hundreds from the stocks,  
And purchases his country-box.

Some three or four miles out of town  
(An hour's ride will bring you down)  
He fixes on his choice abode,  
Not half a furlong from the road :  
And so convenient does it lay,  
The stages pass it ev'ry day :  
And then so snug, so mighty pretty,  
To have a house so near the city !  
Take but your places at the Boar,  
You're set down at the very door.  
We'll then, suppose them fix'd at last,  
White-washing, painting, scrubbing past,  
Hugging themselves in ease and clover,  
With all the fuss of moving over ;  
Lo ! a new heap of whinns are bred,  
And wanton in my lady's head.

Well to be sure it must be own'd  
It is a charming spot of ground ;  
So sweet a distance for a ride,  
And all about so countrified !  
'Twould only be a trifling price  
To make it quite a paradise.

I can-

90 POETICK PIECES.

I cannot bear those nasty rails,  
Those ugly broken mouldy pales :  
Suppose, my dear, instead of these,  
We build a railing, all Chinese :  
Although one hates to be expos'd,  
'Tis dismal to be thus enclos'd ;  
One hardly any object sees—  
I wish you'd fell those odious trees.  
Objects continual passing by  
Were something to amuse the eye,  
But to be pent within the walls—  
One might as well be at St. Paul's.  
Our house beholders would adore,  
Was there a level lawn before ;  
Nothing its views to incommode,  
But quite laid open to the road !  
While every traveller, in amaze,  
Should on our little mansion gaze,  
And, pointing to the choice retreat,  
Cry, That's sir Thrifty's country-seat.

No doubt, her arguments prevail,  
For madam's taste can never fail.

Blest age ! when all men may procure  
The title of a connoisseur ;  
When noble and ignoble herd  
Are govern'd by a single word ;  
Though, like the royal German dames,  
It bears an hundred christian names ;

As

As genius, fancy, judgment, is now call'd all ova  
Whim, caprice, Je ne scai quoi, virtu: d' auctorit  
Which appellations all describe modish taste baa  
Taste and the modern tasteful tribe.

Now bricklay'rs, carpenters, and joiners,  
With Chinese artists, and designers,  
Produce their schemes of alteration,  
To work this wond'rous reformation.  
The useful dome, which secret stood,  
Embosom'd in the yew-tree's wood,  
The trav'lers with amazement see  
A temple, Gothic or Chinese,  
With many a bell and tawdry rag on,  
And crested with a sprawling dragon.  
A wooden arch is bent astride  
A ditch of water, four feet wide,  
With angles, curves, and zigzag lines,  
From Halfpenny's exact designs.  
In front, a level lawn is seen,  
Without a shrub upon the green,  
Where taste would want its first great law,  
But for the skulking, fly ha-ha,  
By whose miraculous assistance,  
You gain a prospect two fields distance.  
And now from Hyde-park corner come,  
The gods of Athens and of Rome,  
Here squabby Cupids take their places,  
With Venus, and the clumsy Graces:

Apollo

92 POETICK PIECES.

Apollo there, with aim so clever,  
Stretches his leaden bow for ever ;  
And there without the pow'r to fly,  
Stands fix'd a tip-toe Mercury.

The villa thus completely grac'd,  
All own that Thrifty has a taste ;  
And madam's female friends and cousins,  
With common-council men, by dozens,  
Flock ev'ry Sunday to the seat,  
To stare about them and to eat.

LLOYD.

C H A P XI.

*On Providence.*

THE Lord my pasture shall prepare,  
And feed me with a shepherd's care ;  
His presence shall my wants supply,  
And guard me with a watchful eye ;  
My noon-day walks he shall attend,  
And all my midnight hours defend.

When in the sultry glebe I faint,  
Or on the thirsty mountain pant ;  
To fertile vales and dewy meads  
My weary wand'ring steps he leads ;  
Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,  
Amid the verdant landscape flow.

Thought

## POETICK PIECES. 193

Though in the paths of death I tread,  
With gloomy horrors overspread,  
My steadfast heart shall fear no ill,  
For thou, O Lord, art with me still;  
Thy friendly crook shall give me aid,  
And guide me through the dreadful shade.

Though in a bare and rugged way,  
Through devious lonely wilds I stray,  
Thy bounty shall my pains beguile;  
The barren wilderness shall smile,  
With sudden greens and herbage crown'd,  
And streams shall murmur all around.

ADDISON.

## C H A P. XII.

### *On Creation.*

THE spacious firmament on high,  
With all the blue æthereal sky,  
And spangled heav'ns, a shining frame,  
Their great original proclaim:

Th' unwearied sun from day to day,  
Does his Creator's pow'r display:  
And publishes, to ev'ry land,  
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon

94 POETICK PIECES.

Soon as the ev'ning shades prevail,  
The moon takes up the wond'rous tale ;  
And nightly to the list'ning earth,  
Repeats the story of her birth :  
While all the stars, that round her burn,  
And all the planets in their turn,  
Confirm the tidings as they roll,  
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though, in solemn silence all  
Move round the dark terrestrial ball ?  
What, though no real voice nor sound,  
Amid their radiant orbs be found ?  
**I**n reason's ear they all rejoice,  
And utter forth a glorious voice,  
For ever singing, as they shine,  
The hand that made us, is divine.

ADDISON.

C H A P XIII.

*On the Death of Mr. Robert Levet,  
A Practiser in Physic.*

**C**ONDEMN'D to Hope's delusive mine,  
As on we toil from day to day,  
By sudden blasts, or slow decline,  
Our social comforts drop away.

## POETICK PIECES. 95

Well try'd through many varying year,  
See Levet to the grave descend,  
Officious, innocent, sincere,  
Of every friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills affection's eye,  
Obscurely wisely and courstly kind;  
Nor lettered arrogance deny  
Thy praise to merit unrefin'd.

When fainting nature call'd for aid,  
And hovering death prepar'd the blow;  
His vigorous remedy display'd  
The power of art without the show.

In misery's darkest cavern known,  
His useful care was ever nigh,  
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,  
And lonely want retir'd to die.

No summons mock'd by chill delay,  
No petty gain disdain'd by pride;  
The modest wants of every day  
The toil of every day supply'd.

His virtues walk'd their narrow round,  
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;  
And sure th' Eternal master found  
The single talent well employ'd.

The

96 POETICK PIECES.

The busy day—the peaceful night,  
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;  
His frame was firm—his powers were bright,  
Tho' now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no fiery, throbbing pain,  
No cold gradations of decay,  
Death broke at once the vital chain,  
And forc'd his soul the nearest way.

JOHNSON.

C H A P. XIV.

Madam Blaze.

GOOD people all, with one accord,  
Lament for madam Blaze,  
Who never wanted a good word—  
From them that spoke her praise.  
  
The needy seldom pafs'd her door,  
And always found her kind;  
She freely lent to all the poor—  
Who left a pledge behind.  
  
She strove the neighbourhood to please,  
With manners wond'rous winning;  
And never follow'd wicked ways,  
Unless when she was sinning.

At

## POETICK PIECES. 97

At church in silk and sattins new,  
With hoop of monstrous size,  
She never slumber'd in her pew,—  
But when she shut her eyes.  
  
Her love was sought, I do aver,  
By twenty beaux, or more;  
The king himself has follow'd her,—  
When she has walk'd before.  
  
But now, her wealth and finery fled,  
Her hangers-on cut short all;  
The doctors found, when she was dead,—  
Her last disorder mortal.  
  
Let us lament, in sorrow sore,  
For Kent-street well may say,  
That had she lived a twelvemonth more,—  
She had not dy'd to day.

GOLDSMITH.

## C H A P. XV.

### *On the Works of Creation.*

BEAUTY complete, and majesty divine,  
In all thy works, ador'd Creator, shine.  
Where'er I cast my wond'ring eyes around,  
The God I seek in ev'ry part is found.

F

Pursuing

## 98 POETICK PIECES.

Pursuing thee, the flow'ry fields I trace,  
And read thy name on ev'ry spire of grass.  
I follow thee thro' many a lonely shade,  
And find thee in the solitary glade.  
I meet thee in the kind, refreshing gale,  
That gently passes thro' the dewy vale.  
The pink, the jess'min, and the purple rose,  
Perfumed by thee, their fragrant leaves disclose.  
The feather'd choir that welcome in the spring,  
By thee, were taught their various notes to sing.  
By thee the morning in her crimson vest,  
And ornaments of golden clouds, is dress'd.  
The sun, in all his splendor, wears thy beams,  
And drinks in light from thy exhaustless streams.  
The moon reveals thee by her glimm'ring ray;  
Unnumber'd stars thy glorious paths display.  
Amidst the solemn darkness of the night,  
The thoughts of God my musing soul delight.  
Thick shades and night thy dread pavilion form;  
In state thou rid'st upon the flying storm;  
While thy strong hand its firecest rage restrains,  
And holds the wild, unmanag'd winds in reins.  
What sparklings of thy majesty appear,  
When thro' the firmament swift lightnings glare?  
When peals of thunder fill the skies around,  
I hear thy voice in the tremendous sound.  
But, oh! how small a part is known of thee;  
From all thy works immense variety?

Whatever mortal men perfection name,  
Thou, in an infinite degree, dost claim.

And while I here thy faintest shadows trace,  
I pine to see the glories of thy face ;  
Where beauty in its never-changing height,  
And uncreated excellence, shines bright,  
When shall the heav'ly scene, without controul,  
Open in dazzling triumph on my soul ?  
My pow'rs, with all their ardor, shall adore,  
And languish for terrestrial charms no more.

Rowe.

## C H A P. XVI.

### *Search after Happiness.*

B E HOLD another cheerful morn arise !  
Behold the sun all-glorious mount the skies !  
Say, can you see this animating sight  
Without a fervent, pious, calm delight ?  
Does not that sun, whose all-prolific ray  
Inspires each object to be light and gay,  
Does not that vivid pow'r teach ev'ry mind,  
To be as warm, benevolent, and kind,  
To burn with unremitting ardor still,  
Like *him* to execute their Maker's will ?  
Then, let us, Power Supreme ! thy will adore,  
Invoke thy mercies, and proclaim thy pow'r ;

F 2

Shalt

## 100 POETICK PIECES.

Shalt thou these benefits in vain bestow ?  
 Shall we forget the source from whence they flow ?  
 Teach us thro' these to lift our hearts to *Thee*,  
 And in the gift the bounteous *Giver* see ;  
 To view thee as thou art, all good and wise,  
 Nor let thy *blessings* hide *Thee* from our eyes ;  
 From all obstructions clear our mental sight,  
 Pour on our souls thy beatific light ;  
 Teach us thy wond'rous goodness to revere,  
 With love to worship, and with reverence fear ;  
 In the *mild works* of thy *benignant* hand,  
 As in the *thunder* of thy dread command ;  
 In *common objects* we neglect thy pow'r,  
 Nor heed a *miracle* in ev'ry flower ;  
 Yet neither hurricanes, nor storms proclaim  
 In *louder language*, thy *Almighty name*.

\* \* \* \* \*

If good we plant not, vice will fill the mind  
 And weeds despoil the space for flow'r's design'd.  
 The human heart ne'er knows a state of rest,  
 Bad tends to worse, and better leads to best ;  
 We either gain or lose, we sink or rise,  
 Nor rests our struggling nature still she dies ;  
 Those very passions which our peace invade,  
 If rightly pointed, blessings may be made ;  
 Then rise, my friend, above terrestial aims,  
 Direct the ardor, which your breast inflames,

To

## POETICK PIECES. 101

To that pure region of eternal joys,  
Where fear disturbs not, nor possession cloys ;  
Beyond what fancy forms of rosy bow'rs,  
Or blooming chaplets of unfading flow'rs.  
Fairer than e'er imagination drew,  
Or poet's warmest visions ever knew ;  
Prest eager onward to those blissful plains,  
Where one unbounded spring for ever reigns.

MORTE.

## C H A P. XVII.

### *The Hero's School of Morality.*

THE HERON, amongst his travels, found,  
A broken statue on the ground ;  
And searching onward, as he went  
He trac'd a ruin'd monument.  
Mould, moss, and shades, had overgrown  
The sculpture of the crumbling stone ;  
Yet e'er he pass'd, with much ado,  
He gues'd, and spell'd out, Sci-pi-o,  
“ Enough, he cry'd ; I'll drudge no more  
In turning the dull stories o'er :  
Let pedants waste their hours of ease  
To sweat all night at Socrates,  
And feed their boys with notes and rules,  
Those tedious recipes of schools,

F 3

To

## 102 POETICK PIECES.

To cure ambition : I can learn  
 With greater ease the great concern  
 Of mortals ; how we may despise  
 All the gay things below the skies.

Methinks a mould'ring pyramid  
 Says all that the old sages said ;  
 For me, these shatter'd tombs contain  
 More morals than the Vatican.  
 The dust of heroes cast abroad,  
 And kick'd, and trampled in the road.  
 The relics of a lofty mind,  
 That lateiy was, and crowns designed,  
 Toss'd for a jest from wind to wind,  
 Bid me be humble, and forbear  
 Tall monuments of fame to rear, MOREH  
 They are but castles in the air.  
 The tow'ring heights, and frightful falls,  
 The ruin'd heaps, and funerals,  
 Of smoaking kingdoms and their kings,  
 Tell me a thousand mournful things  
 In melancholy silence.

---

He  
 That living could not bear to see  
 An equal, now lyes torn and dead ;  
 Here his pale trunk, and there his head ;  
 Great Pompey ! while I meditate,  
 With solemn horror, thy sad fate,

Thy

Thy carcass, scatter'd on the shore  
 Without a name, instructs me more }  
 Than my whole library before.  
 Lye still, my Plutarch then, and sleep,  
 And my good Seneca may keep  
 Your volumes clos'd for ever too,  
 I have no further use for you :  
 For when I feel my virtue fail,  
 And my ambitious thoughts prevail,  
 I'll take a turn among the tombs,  
 And see whereto all glory comes :  
 There the vile foot of every clown  
 Tramples the sons of honour down ;  
 Beggars with awful ashes sport,  
 And tread the Cæsars in the dirt."

WATTS.

## C H A P. XVIII.

*Meditation in a Grove.*

SWEET muse, descend, and bless the shade,  
 And bless the evening grove ;  
 Bus'ness, and noise, and day, are fled,  
 And every care, but love.

104 POETICK PIECES.

But hence, ye wanton, young, and fair,  
Mine is a purer flame ;  
No Phillis shall infect the air,  
With her unhallow'd name.

Jesus has all my powers posses'd,  
My hopes, my fears, my joys ;  
He, the dear sovereign of my breast,  
Shall still command my voice.

Some of the fairest choirs above  
Shall flock around my song,  
With joy to hear the name they love  
Sound from a mortal tongue.

His charms shall make my numbers flow,  
And hold the falling floods,  
While silence sits on ev'ry bough ;  
And bends the list'ning woods.

I'll carve our passion on the bark,  
And every wounded tree  
Shall drop, and bear some mystic mark  
That Jesus died for me.

The swains shall wonder when they read,  
Inscrib'd on all the grove,  
That heav'n itself came down and bled  
To win a mortal's love.

WATTS.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIX.

*The present Condition of Man vindicated.*

**H**EAV'N from all creatures hides the book of fate,

All but the page prescrib'd, their present state :  
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know,  
Or who could suffer *being* here below ?

The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play ?  
Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,  
And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.  
Oh, blindness to the future ! kindly given,  
That each may fill the circle mark'd by heav'n ;  
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,  
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,  
Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,  
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

Hope humbly then ; with trembling pinions soar,  
Wait the great teacher death ; and God adore.  
What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,  
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.  
Hope springs eternal in the human breast ;  
Man never *is*, but always *to* be blest.  
The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,  
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

POPE.

F 5

C H A P.

## C H A P. XX.

*Epistle to a Friend.*

HAPPY the man, who tastes the present hour,  
 Nor breaks his rest for riches, or for pow'r;  
 Who governing himself, is just and wise,  
 Nor over others aims to tyrannize;  
 What singular advantage can we find  
 This way—to suit the well-discerning mind?  
 Can India's stores give to the expiring, breath?  
 Or will they bribe inexorable death?  
 Will courtly splendor, or imperial might,  
 The king of terrors mollify, or fright?  
 The rich and great will violent disease  
 Less torture? or can health more fully please?  
 Can all internal consolations lie  
 In robes of tissue, or the Tyrian dye?  
 Bless they not oft' the cottage? —

POPE.

C H A P.

C H A P XXI.

*Sweetness, an Ode.*

O F damask cheeks, and radiant eyes,

Let other poets tell;

Within the bosom of the fair

Superior beauties dwell.

There all the sprightly powers of wit,

In blithe assemblage play;

There ev'ry social virtue sheds

Its intellectual ray.

But as the sun's resplendent light

Heav'n's wide expanse refines;

With sov'reign lustre through the soul,

Celestial sweetness shines.

This mental beam dilates the heart,

And sparkles in the face;

It harmonizes every thought,

And heightens every grace.

One glimpse can soothe the troubled breast,

The heaving sigh restrain!

Can make the bed of sickness please,

And stop the sense of pain.

## 108 POETICK PIECES.

Its power can charm the savage heart,

The tyrant's pity move :

To smiles convert the wildest rage,

And melt the soul to love.

When sweetness beams upon the throne

In majesty benign,

The awful splendors of a crown

With milder lustre shine.

In scenes of poverty and woe,

Where melancholy dwells,

The influence of this living ray

The dreary gloom dispels.

Thus, when the blooming spring returns

To cheer the mournful plains,

Through earth and air, with genial warmth

Ethereal mildness reigns.

Beneath its bright, auspicious beams

No boisterous passions rise,

Moroseness quits the peaceful scene,

And baleful discord flies.

A thousand nameless beauties spring,

A thousand virtues glow ;

A smiling train of joys appear,

And endless blessings flow.

Un-

POETICK PIECES. 109

Unbounded charity displays  
Her sympathizing charms ;  
And friendship's pure seraphic flame,  
A generous bosom warms.

Almighty love exerts his power,

And spreads with secret art

A soft sensation through the frame,

A transport through the heart.

Nor shall the storms of age, which cloud

Each gleam of sensual joy,

And blast the gaudy flow'r's pride,

These blest effects destroy.

When that fair form shall sink in years,

And all those graces fly ;

The beauty of thy heavenly mind

Shall length of days defy.

ROBERTSON.

CHAP.

## 110 POETICK PIECES.

### C H A P. XXII.

#### *The Cameleon.*

OFT has it been my lot to mark  
A proud, conceited, talking spark,  
With eyes, that hardly serv'd at most  
To guard their master 'gainst a post;  
Yet round the world the blade has been  
To see whatever could be seen,  
Returning from his finish'd tour,  
Grown ten times perter than before;  
Whatever word you chance to drop,  
The travell'd fool your mouth will stop,  
‘ Sir, if my judgment you'll allow—  
‘ I've seen—and sure I ought to know’—  
So begs you'd pay a due submission,  
And acquiesce in his decision.

Two travellers of such a cast,  
As o'er Arabia's wilds they past,  
And on their way, in friendly chat,  
Now talk'd of this, and then of that,  
Discours'd awhile 'mongst other matter,  
Of the cameleon's form and nature.  
‘ A stranger animal,’ cries one,  
‘ Sure never liv'd beneath the sun :  
‘ A lizard's body, lean and long,  
‘ A fish's head, a serpent's tongue,

‘ Its

## POETICK PIECES. 111

• Its tooth with triple claw disjoin'd ;  
• And what a length of tail behind !  
• How slow its pace ! and then its hue—  
• Who ever saw so fine a blue ?

‘ Hold there,’ the other quick replies,  
‘ Tis green—I saw it with these eyes,  
As late with open mouth it lay,  
And warm'd it in the sunny ray ;  
Stretch'd at its ease the beast I view'd,  
And saw it eat the air for food.

‘ I've seen it, Sir, as well as you,  
And must again affirm it blue ;  
At leisure I the beast survey'd,  
Extended in the cooling shade.

‘ Tis green, ‘tis green, Sir, I assure ye’—  
‘ Green !’ cries the other, in a fury—  
‘ Why, Sir—d’ye think I’ve lost my eyes ?’  
‘ Twere no great loss,’ the friend replies,  
‘ For, if they always servē you thus,  
You’ll find them but of little use.’

So high at last the contest rose,  
From words they almost came to blows ;  
When luckily came by a third—  
To him the question they refer’d ;  
And begg’d he’d tell ‘em, if he knew,  
Whether the thing was green or blue.

‘ Sirs,

‘Sirs,’ cries the umpire, ‘cease your pother—  
 • The creature’s neither one nor t’other.  
 • I caught the animal last night,  
 • And view’d it o’er by candle light;  
 • I mark’d it well—’twas black as jet—  
 • You stare—but, Sirs, I’ve got it yet,  
 • And can produce it.’—‘Pray, Sir, do:  
 • I’ll lay my life the thing is blue.’  
 • And I’ll be sworn, that when you’ve seen  
 • The reptile, you’ll pronounce him green.  
 • Well then, at once to ease the doubt,’  
 Replies the man, ‘I’ll turn him out:  
 • And when before your eyes I’ve set him,  
 • If you don’t find him black, I’ll eat him:  
 He said: then full before their sight  
 Produc’d the beast; and lo! ’twas white.

MERRICK.

## C H A P. XXIII.

*An Address to the Deity.*

**F**ather of light and life! Thou Good Supreme!  
**O** teach me what is good. Teach me Thyself!  
 Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,  
 From every low pursuit, and feed my soul  
 With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;  
 Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!

THOMSON.

## C H A P XXIV.

*From Young's Night Thoughts.*

*NIGHT*, sable goddess ! from her *ebon* throne,  
 In rayless majesty, now stretches forth  
 Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumb'ring world.  
 Silence, how dead ! and darkness how profound !  
 Nor eye, nor list'ning ear, an object finds ;  
 Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the gen'ral pulse  
 Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause ;  
 An awful pause ! prophetic of her end.

\* \* \* \* \*

The bell strikes *one*. We take no note of time,  
 But from its loss. To give it then a tongue,  
 Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,  
 I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,  
 It is the *knell* of my departed hours :  
 Where are they ? With the years beyond the flood.  
 It is the signal that demands dispatch :  
 How much is to be done ? My hopes and fears  
 Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge  
 Look down—On what ? A fathomless abyss ;  
 A dread eternity ! How surely mine !  
 And can eternity belong to me,  
 Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour ?

C H A P.

## C H A P. XXV.

*Spring.*

— GRADUAL sinks the breeze  
 Into a perfect calm ; that not a breath  
 Is heard to quiver thro' the closing woods,  
 Or rustling turn the many twinkling leaves  
 Of aspin tall. Th' uncurling floods, diffus'd  
 In glassy breadth, seem thro' delusive lapse  
 Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all,  
 And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks  
 Drop the dry sprig, and mute-imploring eye  
 The falling verdure. Hush'd in short suspense,  
 The plamy people streak their wings with oil,  
 To throw the lucid moisture trickling off ;  
 And wait th' approaching sign to strike, at once,  
 Into the gen'ral choir. Ev'n mountains, vales,  
 And forests, seem impatient to demand  
 The promis'd sweetnes. Man superior walks  
 Amid the glad creation, musing praise,  
 And looking lively gratitude. At last,  
 The clouds consign their treasures to the fields ;  
 And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool  
 Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow,  
 In large effusion, o'er the freshen'd world.  
 The stealing show'r is scarce to patter heard,

By

## POETICK PIECES. 115

By such as wander thro' the forest-walks,  
Beneath the umbrageous multitude of leaves.  
But who can hold the shade, while Heav'n descends  
In universal bounty, shedding herbs,  
And fruits, and flow'rs, on Nature's ample lap?  
Swift fancy fir'd anticipates their growth;  
And, while the milky nutriment distills,  
Beholds the kindling country colour round.

THOMSON.

## C H A P. XXVI.

### Summer.

**S**HORT is the doubtful empire of the night,  
And soon, observant of approaching day,  
The meek-ey'd morn appears, mother of dews,  
At first faint-gleaming in the dappled east:  
Till far o'er ether spreads the wid'ning glow:  
And, from before the lustre of her face,  
White break the clouds away. With quick'ned step,  
Brown night retires: young day pours in apace,  
And opens all the lawny prospect wide,  
The dripping rock, the mountain's misty top  
Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn.  
Blue thro' the dusk, the smoaking currents shine;  
And from the bladed field the fearful hare  
Limps, awkward: while along the forest-glade

The

By

116 POETICK PIECES.

The wild deer trip, and often turning gaze  
At early passenger. Music awakes  
The native voice of undissembled joy;  
And thick around the woodland hymns arise.  
Rous'd by the cock, the soon-clad shepherd leaves,  
His mossy cottage, where with peace he dwells;  
And from the crowded fold, in order, drives  
His flock, to taste the verdure of the morn.

THOMSON.

C H A P. XXVII.

*Autumn.*

SOON as the morning trembles o'er the sky,  
And, unperceiv'd, unfolds the spreading day;  
Before the ripened field the reapers stand,  
In fair array; each by the lass he loves,  
To bear the rougher part, and mitigate  
By nameless gentle offices her toil.  
At once they stoop and swell the lusty sheaves;  
While thro' their cheerful band the rural talk,  
The rural scandal, and the rural jest,  
Fly harmless, to deceive the tedious time,  
And steal unfehl the sultry hours away.  
Behind the master walks, builds up the shocks;  
And, conscious, glancing oft on ev'ry side  
His sated eye, feels his heart heave with joy.  
The gleaners spread around, and here and there,

Spike

## POETICK PIECES. 117

Spike after spike, their scanty harvest pick.  
Be not too narrow, husbandmen! but fling  
From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,  
The lib'ral handful. Think, oh grateful think!  
How good the God of Harvest is to you;  
Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields;  
While these unhappy partners of your kind  
Wide-hover round you, like the fowls of heaven,  
And ask their humble dole. The various turns  
Of fortune ponder; that your sons may want  
What now, with hard reluctance, faint, ye give.

THOMSON.

## C H A P. XXVIII.

### *Winter.*

—FIRST joyless rains obscure  
Drive thro' the mingling skies with vapours foul;  
Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods,  
That grumbling wave below. Th' unsightly plain  
Lies a brown deluge; as the low-bent clouds  
Pour flood on flood, yet unexhausted still  
Combine, and deep'ning into night shut up  
The day's fair face. The wanderers of heaven,  
Each to his home, retire; save those that love  
To take their pastime in the troubled air,  
Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.

The

118 POETICK PIECES.

The cattle from th' untasted fields return,  
And ask, with meanning lowe, their wonted stalls,  
Or ruminate in the contiguous shade.  
Thither the household feath'ry people crowd,  
The crested cock, with all his female train,  
Penfive, and dripping; while the cottage-hind  
Hangs o'er th' enliv'ning blaze, and taleful there  
Recounts his simple frolic: much he talks,  
And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows  
Without, and rattles on his humble roof.

Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swell'd,  
And the mix'd ruin of its banks o'erspread,  
At last the rous'd-up river pours along:  
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,  
From the rude mountain, and the mossy wild,  
Tumbling thro' rocks abrupt, and sounding far;  
Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads,  
Calm, sluggish, silent; till again, constrain'd  
Between two meeting hills, it bursts away,  
Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream;  
There gath'ring triple force, rapid, and deep,  
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders  
through.

THOMSON.

F I N I S.

**BOOKS printed for W. BENT,**  
Pater noster Row.

**1. A Guide to the English Tongue.**  
In Two Parts. The First, proper for Beginners.  
The Second, for those of riper Years. By the  
Rev. THOMAS DYCHE. A New Edition, im-  
proved and enlarged; with an Appendix, contain-  
ing many additional Lessons, Fables, and Cuts.  
Price 1s.

The Public's distinguished Preference to this  
useful Book, has induced some Persons to that very  
unfair Practice of printing spurious and imperfect  
Editions. Let it therefore be remembered, that  
the genuine and correct Edition is printed only for  
W. BENT, and has his Majesty's Licence on the  
Back of the Title-Page.

**2. The Holy Bible, or the Old and New**  
Testament, Digested, Illustrated, and Explained,  
by Way of Question and Answer. In which the  
principal controverted Points are considered, and  
the Connection of Sacred and Profane History pre-  
served. Compiled chiefly from the Writings of  
the most eminent Historians, Divines, and Com-  
mentators. Designed for promoting Christian  
Knowledge. The Third Edition, corrected, and  
illustrated with Maps, Price 6s.

This Book is recommended to Families and  
Schools, being the best and most useful Compen-  
dium of the Scriptures extant in our own, or per-  
haps in any other Language.

**3. The Happy Life: or, The Contented**  
Man. With Reflections upon divers Moral Sub-  
jects. Translated from the French of M. De  
VERNAGE, D. D. Price 3s.

**4. The**

BOOKS printed for W. BENT,  
Pater noster Row.

4. **The Rule of Life**, in select Sentences: Collected from the greatest Authors, Ancient and Modern. A new Edition, with Additions, Price 3s. The Precepts, Maxims, and Reflections, contained in this Book, exhibit a Picture of Human Life; wherein the Passions, Follies, and Foibles of Mankind, are delineated and expressed in their proper Colours: Virtue is set forth in the most amiable Light, and Vice exposed in its natural Deformity.

3. **The Life and Adventures of Joe Thompson**. A Narrative founded on Fact. Written by Himself. Two Pocket Volumes, with Frontispieces. Price 6s.

This excellent Book is recommended to the Perusal of all Ranks of People, and particularly to the Youth of both Sexes. In Families it should become a kind of Monitor, and in Schools, a *Vade Mecum*.

6. **The Pantheon**; representing the Fabulous Histories of the Heathen Gods and most Illustrious Heroes; in a short, plain, and familiar Method, by Way of Dialogue, by ANDREW TOOKE, A. M. A New Edition, revised, corrected, amended, and illustrated with Cuts of the several Deities. Price 4s.

7. **The Complete Young Man's Companion**: or an Easy Introduction to the most useful Parts of Learning. By J. SEALLY, Author of the Accountant's Companion, Moral Tales, &c. The Second Edition, illustrated with Copper-plates. Price 2s. 6d.

